Funds for detection and prevention of Aids in Orissa

967. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the Central funds allocated to Orissa for detection and prevention of AIDS;

(b) whether ICMR would be directed to take active lead in the matter; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons for giving low priority to this health menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) Two surveillance centres for AIDS have been set-up in Orissa state, one at the Regional Midical Research Centre at Bhubaneshwar and the other at S.C.B. Medical College, Cuttack. During 1986-87, the centres were provided with the necessary equipments needed for the screening. The personnel were trained to carry out the tests and a contingency grant was provided to take care of the expenses in sera collection and transport. A state of AIDS cell was also set up to take up the responsibilities of sera collection and follow-up among high risk groups. During the subsequent years, AIDS surveillance centres have been provided with a contingency grant commensurate with the work load in the centre.

(b) There had been periodic visits by ICMR staff to the centres to review and assist the centres. Guidelines for carrying out sera surveillance work and providing follow up care has been sent to the surveillance centres and the State AIDS Officer.

(c) No. The AIDS surveillance activity has not been given low priority.

Preference to foreign airlines by the air traffic to South East Asia from Madras

968 SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a major segment of air traffic from Madras to South East Asia uses foreign airlines;

(b) if so, whether Government have studied the reasons for preference given to the airlines, other than Air India;

(c) whether discourtesy and inefficiency are the root causes of the lack of preference for Air India; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to overhaul Air India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) Malaysian Airways and Singapore Airlines are carrying more traffic than Air India from Madras to South East Asia because:—

(i) Number of frequencies operated by two foreign airlines are more than those of Air India.

(ii) Air India has to carry traffic originating from Bombay also whereas the two foreign carriers operate to and from Madras only.

(iii) The two airlines are carrying Madras-South East Asia traffic not only to their own countries but also to their neighbouring countries.